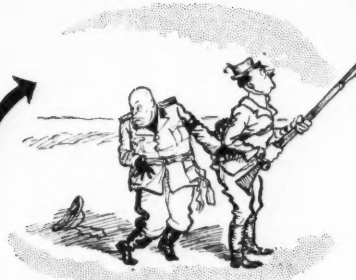


PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCI No. 5257

December 3 1941

Charivaria

A SUNDAY newspaper astrologer says that Herr HITLER will get the surprise of his life this month. And so will the newspaper astrologer if it comes off.

America and Germany are still not at war, though they may be said to have reached the Wimbledon equivalent of a preliminary knock-up.

"Plain designs for interior decorating are the most effective and the most economical," says an expert. Many people are having their wallpaper turned.

Italian convoys in future may proceed unescorted across the Mediterranean. It is felt that they become increasingly despondent surrounded by battleships.



My sister and I don't talk about that. We get it crooned over the wireless.

A music-hall performer has toured all round the world playing the piano with his nose. Rather flat by now, we should think.

A correspondent says he does not object to his daughter wearing trousers, except that the garments evidently encourage her to stand in front of the fire like a man or an isosceles triangle.



We hear that MUSSOLINI has lost his voice. It will be months and months before HITLER notices it.

Owing to the failure of the Russians to collapse at Moscow the German public is now urged to believe that it was not actually the FUEHRER who lent his name to the offensive but one of his over-sanguine doubles.

A German orchestra is to visit Lisbon. Dr. GOEBBELS is expected to uncover a foul plot of British residents to mar the louder parts of Wagner by eating lemons within range of the brasses.

Cigars, nine inches long, recently auctioned for charity, cost in normal times 8s. 9d. each and take 2½ hours to smoke. Obviously this is a great saving in matches.

"Ibid was quite correct in saying that we do not possess any single document . . . embodying all the rights of government."—*Student's Examination Paper*. But what does Passim say?



A Hamburg Prize Court has ruled that Norway is still at war with Germany. This confirms the opinion already held by Nazi soldiers in Norway.

"PARIS MAY CUT OFF THE GAS."
Daily Mail.
Nobody believes it anyway.

Modern children are very sophisticated. There have been several cases recently of little ones in London stores insisting that Father Christmas should show his identity card.

The Battle of the Bund

TO seem to sympathize with a cause that one hates, to play the part of an admiring and enthusiastic adherent of it, slapping the other members heartily on the back, heiling Hitler and viva-ing the Duce in dark underground rooms—all that sounds to me rather easy and rather fun; and often I have felt that I should like to be a Secret Service agent, in America or anywhere else, until I come to the part where a desk has to be forced open and rifled in a hurry while the subversive activity-monger is called for a few moments out of the room.

My confederate has taken the fellow into the kitchenette of the flatlet to look at the ovenette or to listen to the blue budgerigars, and I have about three minutes and a half in which to find incriminating papers, ram them into my pocket, put everything straight, and stand there whistling and looking dreamily out of the window as if nothing had happened while they were away.

"Well, what have you got?" inquires the Big Chief of the Investigation Bureau when I return to Headquarters. Proudly I take out my haul.

He looks at the two unpaid telephone bills, the invitation to an old concert, and the furniture inventory. He seems pained. He suggests that I have perhaps been mistaken in my choice of a career. Perhaps he is right. I am not really quick at finding important documents of my own when I want them. I don't think I should ever find other people's.

How charming is the stage, where the players have only seen one set of "papers" in all their lives, and transfer them rapidly from hiding-place to hiding-place, and never mix them up with circulars, unanswered letters and charity appeals, which ought to have gone to Lord Beaverbrook long ago!

These thoughts came to me when I was reading Mr. Richard Rollins' boldly-entitled and rather gaudily-jacketed *I Find Treason*.* He certainly found it.

Out of two hundred and twenty pages, nearly sixty are facsimiles of damning letters and attestation forms and membership cards, borrowed, bought or stolen from pro-Nazis in the U.S.A. And Mr. Rollins didn't only get

papers. His principal task was to hunt down Herr Fritz Kuhn, the little leader of the German-American Bund, and one of his more elaborate devices was to take a room next door to a beautiful lady whom Herr Kuhn rather foolishly visited. "I rented Room 405 for her. In the telephone-box I installed a sensitive microphone. Its wires ran parallel with the phone wires. I stretched them under the rug, cut through the door-sill and led them under the wall-edge of the hall and into Room 406, where I was to live for the next two months. In my room we placed a recording-machine to catch the conversations picked up by the mike and transfer them to steel records."

This too sounds tricky to me. I am never at my best when leading wires about and installing sensitive microphones. I expect in the end I should only have got an electric shock, a bruised thumb and the second half of a vaudeville programme; but Mr. Richard Rollins learned a lot. They finally caught Herr Kuhn for embezzling money belonging to the Bund and spending it at night-clubs and elsewhere, which raises a—to me—rather interesting question.

If Mr. Herbert Morrison were to seize me as the leader of a secret Nazi organization in England (as of course he might), would it be an aggravation of my offence, or a mitigation of it, when I proved (as I certainly should) that I had been spending all the money of the society on cigarettes and beer? If at any time America "comes into the war" she will have to consider these things.

Herr Fritz Kuhn, however, was not Mr. Rollins' only prey. He went out after Francesco Paolo Castorina, the "Little Duce," who was, or had been, a member of the German-American Bund, the Christian Front, the National Guard, the Naval Reserve, the Christian Crusaders Against Communism, the American Union of Fascists and the Fascist Party of Italy.

In spite of these glorious affiliations he was easier to deal with than Herr Kuhn.

"I knew that he was mixed up with every hate gang in the East. So I offered to buy his correspondence and files. He hesitated only about the price. He wanted a thousand dollars as first payment. We concluded the bargain with my paying a total of one hundred dollars for everything he owned."

It is not stated whether this included his ice-machine.

Mr. Rollins trailed also the renowned Father Coughlin, and an eighty-year-old lady Professor of Columbia University, author of many learned books, whom he calls "the focal dissemination point for the German Nazis to the native Fascists."

It seems that Germans slipped off ships, enrolled themselves in the Army, in the Navy, in the police, enrolled themselves everywhere and formed themselves into a bewildering series of strangely-named clubs, brought ashore pistols hidden in dummy Bibles, tried to tie themselves up with the Ku Klux Klan, with the I.R.A., with anti-Semitic and anti-Communist organizations and had two hundred thousand members enrolled in the Bund, eighteen thousand wearing uniforms.

All this between 1933 and 1941. I sometimes think it would have been almost better and simpler for the Nazis in America to pretend to be Communists, and the Communists to pretend to be Nazis, just to give the authorities a worse headache and bewilder the police a little bit more.

Anyway, you can have my Secret Service badge. EVOE.



CHURCHILL.

"Now let me see—what was your original lead?"

* HARRAP, 10/6.



PREPARATIONS FOR LIBERTY

"How do you spell Auchinleck?"



"It's a good job you didn't call yesterday—I was busy."

Little Talks

(Post-war)

WHAT is it now, Titmouse?
*The railings, Sir Reginald.
 Home Security say it's urgent.
 Here is the file.*

Nothing is urgent this morning.
 How did you celebrate the Armistice?
*My wife and I sat up and listened to
 the fireworks on the wireless.*

Did you? Well, I'm afraid I
 saluted the termination of hostilities
 in a very different manner. And I
 don't feel too well. However, what
 is it?

The railings, Sir Reginald.

Yes, you said railings before. Don't
 go on saying "railings." What on
 earth do you mean?

The railings round the parks and

*public spaces, Sir Reginald. Here is
 the file.*

But there are no railings round the
 parks and public spaces.

Exactly, Sir Reginald. Here is the file.

Don't go on saying "Here is the
 file." I can see the file plainly. Well,
 I can just see it. How is your head?

Normal, Sir Reginald.

Fortunate fellow. What were we
 discussing?

*The railings, Sir Reginald. Here
 is the—*

Say it again and I scream. Rail-
 ings. Railings. Oh, yes, I remember.
 During the war we took all the railings
 away from the squares and parks.
 Why did we do that?

To make—

I remember. They were all pulped
 down and turned into comforts for the
 troops, or something—

Tanks, Sir Reginald. Tanks and guns.

Oh, yes. Have you any bicarbonate
 of soda?

No, Sir Reginald.

Or a prairie oyster?

I don't think—

What is the Ministry of Post-War
 Problems for? What have we done
 with the wasted guns? If I can't get
 a prairie oyster the morning after
 Armistice—! However. Railings.
 What about them?

*Here is the— It is about the
 Restoration of Railings, Sir Reginald.*

Restoration! But who wants to restore the railings? I was in Hyde Park myself last night. A girl took my hat.

Yes, Sir Reginald?

Then she ran off into the Park. And I had to go after her to get my hat.

Did you recover your hat, Sir Reginald?

I forget. I know I got hers. But if there had been railings round the Park I couldn't possibly have got my hat back.

If there had been railings round the Park, Sir Reginald, she couldn't have taken it into the Park.

Don't be absurd.

As a matter of fact, Sir Reginald, Home Security regard Hyde Park as a problem of especial urgency.

Why?

Industrial disturbance. Subversive demonstration. Public morals.

Nonsense. Frightful nonsense. What is the time?

11.30, Sir Reginald.

When do they open?

"Permitted hours," I believe, in this division commence at 12.0 noon.

What a country! But, look here, why weren't all these things settled long ago? After all, we've been discussing post-war problems for the last four years!

The file, as you see, Sir Reginald, is of considerable antiquity and size. There has been much correspondence, and some disagreement.

Does somebody disagree with Home Security?

Yes, Sir Reginald.

Hooray! I feel better.

"Reconstruction and Amenities," as you see, think that—

Oh, yes, here we are. "The enhanced beauty of the parks and squares, the new sense of nearness to Nature are advantages which must weigh heavily in the aesthetic scale." Jolly good show!

Yes, Sir Reginald. And it goes on "From the political angle—"

What?

"From the political angle—"

Christmas! What an expression!

"—from the political angle the general feeling of genuine common ownership, the direct perception of barriers removed and avenues opened, have borne a social fruit—"

A what?

"A social fruit," Sir Reginald.

Heavens!

"—a social fruit which this Department at least would be reluctant to see abandoned or jeopardized—"

But you can't jeopardize a social fruit! However, I'm all for Reconstruction and Amenities.

They also say that in fact many of our railings are extremely beautiful.

But they've all been boiled down. What do the others say?

The Air Ministry "would be opposed to the restoration of the railings, in view of the possibility of occasional accidents on the fringes of the projected Hyde Park Air-port—"

Crash-landings by helicopters?

That sort of thing, I imagine, Sir Reginald. Sudden fogs, and so on.

Very sensible. And who's on the other side?

Works and Buildings "apprehend damage to valuable plants and flowers, petty pilfering, and—"

But people don't walk about the parks treading on the beds and picking flowers now. Why should the absence of railings—

I understand, Sir Reginald, that some damage was done last night.

Maybe. But I had to get my hat. Home Security, I suppose, are terrified about rioters—and revellers.

Twice, in recent times, they say, Hyde Park has been an armed camp. The military—

Yes, but a camp is expected to protect itself. Anyhow, I'm not going to put railings round the Parks.

That, Sir Reginald, is not quite the point.

Then what is the point?

Home Security have insisted that some of the parks shall be re-railed and Works and Buildings are ready to erect the rails. We are asked to allocate.

"Allocate." What d'you mean? We haven't got any railings to allocate.

Yes, Sir Reginald.

What? But I thought all the railings had gone to make guns and shells.

Yes, Sir Reginald.

Then why—I must have a prairie oyster! Why—What—How many railings have we got?

About 12,000,000, Sir Reginald.

Good heavens! But why weren't they turned into tanks and things? Am I raving, or what?

In a sense, they were.

I am raving.

Soon after the Ministry of Production had removed the railings for war purposes, it was realized by the then Minister—

Which Minister is this?

Our own Minister—Post-War Problems—realized that one of the first problems to arise after the war would concern the restoration of railings.

Too right.

He realized, further, that the pressure from the Departments interested in favour of restoring the railings would be almost irresistible—

How did he realize that?

By his knowledge of the British character, Sir Reginald, and—

Jolly good show.

And of the Home Office. It was therefore decided, at an inter-departmental conference, to build up a reserve of railings ready for immediate action at the close of hostilities. For this reserve it was obviously impossible to utilize the railings which had been pulled down and converted into tanks and guns—

Yes, I quite see that.

It was therefore arranged, through the Ministry of Production, that railings to the number of 12,000,000 should be specially constructed and stored against the post-war situation.

Good gracious!

The number in reserve is, of course, insufficient to re-enclose all the many spaces which are, or rather were, enclosed in this much-enclosed country. And our present task—your task, Sir Reginald—is to allocate, according to an ordered scheme of priorities, the appropriate number of the railings available to the various particular open spaces which—

Stop, Titmouse! I am raving. I am going out. Give me my hat.

You did not bring a hat this morning, Sir Reginald.

A. P. H.

A Question

WOMEN wear trousers
To trail round the shops;
Women in trousers
Wield brushes and mops.

Women wear trousers
For sleeping and sitting
And pouring out tea in
And doing their knitting,

For cleaning the windows,
And filling the shells,
And taking round letters,
And answering bells.

Women in trousers
(Or leastways in breeches)
Are planting potatoes
And scraping out ditches.

They wear them for punching
Our tickets in trams,
Or pushing their babies
Abroad in their prams,

In fact nearly everything
Under the sun,
But—why don't they wear them
For manning a gun?

C. F. S.

The Moon Soon

YES. I begin like that chiefly because it seems good to give the large capital Y a little exercise now and again; but also, in some small degree, to express an affirmative reaction. Confronted with the statement that there will be trips to the moon within a hundred years I do observe, half-absently but half-meaning it, "Yes."

Actually when these trips will start is a little obscure. The news item begins "A prediction that man's first visit to the moon would take place some time within the next hundred years, if not sooner, was made by Dr. Dinsmore Alter, director of the Griffith Astronomical Observatory, at Los Angeles." Now "within the next hundred years, if not sooner," certainly means that for all the writer knows man's first visit to the moon may have taken place already—last Tuesday, say. It's an impressive thought.

But I don't know why man went, or why man proposes to go. There seems very little point in visiting the moon apart from being afterwards able to boast about it. I have been reading up the matter in my desultory way and I don't think the moon is a good place to go to.

No visitors, I think, would stay long; partly because there is nothing to support life, and partly because there is nothing to talk about. "Look at that crater"—"My word, that's a big mountain"—"Get off my foot"—the possibilities of remarks of this kind are soon exhausted, and there could (I must emphasize this) be no conversation at all about the weather. "The causes of meteorological phenomena on the earth," says the Encyclopædia, preceding this statement with an unattached participle which I have kindly omitted, "are non-existent on the moon." There is no atmosphere, for one thing. Luckily for Mr. Wells's two explorers, they

went before this was agreed upon and found some air there: thin, but breathable.

About the temperature I have my doubts. It seems that one man concluded that the highest temperature reached by the moon approximated to the freezing-point of water, but then along comes somebody else to show that really it must be about the boiling-point of water. The luggage taken by visitors to the moon who wish to be on the safe side will have to run such a gamut as was seldom seen outside a catalogue, unless they adopt the suggestion of Professor J. B. S. Haldane. From his *Science and Everyday Life* I see that the wear for visitors to the moon is "a suit containing oxygen under pressure," and that one should be "insulated against heat and cold with several layers of aluminium foil."

Mr. Wells's pair managed with blankets, so far as I remember. Well, well.

Discussing this matter of "being in a place," Samuel Butler demonstrated that the point is absence of distraction, ability to concentrate: "he that is examining the moon through some great telescope is more in the moon than he is on earth"—certainly more than if he were actually there, blundering about in a suit full of oxygen and thinking about the return journey. There is of course quite a bit of landscape on the moon, but as far as I can make out it is just up and down, up and down; it is very likely more interesting to us here, who can see it in bulk and ponder on the names given to its phenomena, than to anybody on the spot, who might have landed inside a crater (as the Wellsians did) and found himself unable to see anything but the rocks in his immediate neighbourhood. We down here can study the big photograph in the Encyclopædia and refer to the list underneath of seas, mountains and volcanoes; up there I am sure there would be difficulty in telling which was which. There is no water on the moon, remember; "sea" is merely a courtesy title, like "Esq." or "Cully."

The mountain-ranges listed by the Encyclopædia are no particular fun: Caucasus, Apennines, Alps, Carpathians—why, a fellow might be at home. I don't take much stock in the seas either. They include Tranquillitatis, Serenitatis, Frigoris, Mortis and Somniorum, and look by no means a lively lot on the whole. But there are nineteen named volcanoes, and anyone fond of eyestrain can spend a happy hour over them.

The volcano named after Julius Cæsar I took quite a long time finding; it is quite close to, and (to my unskilled eye) just about as big as, that called Boscovich. Boscovich was an eighteenth-century Italian mathematician who dedicated to the Royal Society a Latin poem of some five thousand lines, mostly written on horseback and later described as "uninstructive to an astronomer and unintelligible to anyone else." So much for Julius Cæsar.

Plato has a pretty good one, and so has J. G. F. von Bohnenberger, who slightly modified the form of the dry pile electrometer.

But enough of this; I am sure you are worrying about what a visit to the moon would cost. It is possible, according to Dr. Alter, to send objects to the moon now; and "it has been estimated," he says, "that the cost of a rocket to span the distance of between 232,000 to 253,000 miles would be about £25,000,000."

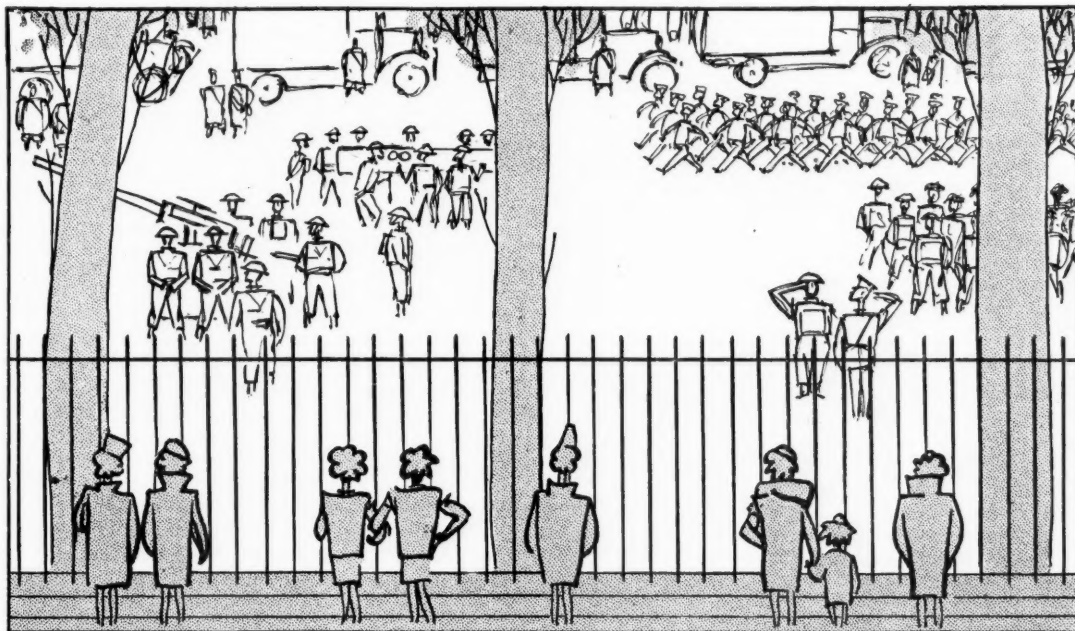
Just under (if we go by latest advices) the cost of two days of the war. Or would you rather have those, my little man?

R. M.

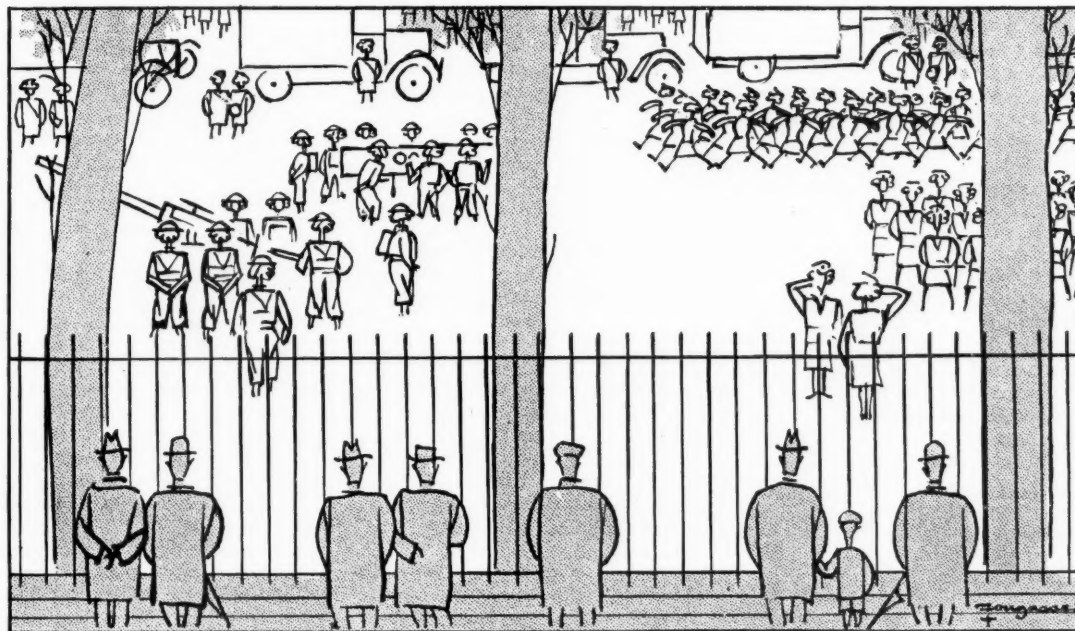


ANOTHER CHANGED FACE

(Dedicated with admiration to the A.T.S.)



1



2



"When I was in the Crimea . . ."

Pipes

ONE is prepared to suffer a great deal for the cause for which we are fighting, but the news that a large percentage of the tobacco intended for pipes is being used for cigarettes makes one seriously think that some changes in the Government may be necessary. I yield to none in my admiration for Mr. Churchill, but he cannot have time to see to everything, and it is possible that he may occasionally have to leave even major problems, such as the distribution of tobacco, to underlings. It is therefore essential that the Cabinet should be ruthlessly purged of all men of inferior calibre.

It may be argued of course that some of the Ministers are unlikely, from the nature of their offices, to have anything to do with the tobacco-supply, but so long as they remain in the Cabinet there is always the danger that they may be moved into a key position by a Cabinet reshuffle.

There should of course be a separate Minister for Smokes. It is ridiculous that a man charged with the all-important task of handling the nation's tobacco-supply should have to fritter away his time attending to such minor matters as food, clothing, raw materials and munitions. It is probably this preoccupation with other matters that has made the present Minister satisfy himself by merely distributing the available supplies on a population basis, with the Domesday Book figures (if they

had population in those days?) as a standard.

A Minister for Smokes really able to get down to the job would see that tobacco was distributed on a basis of present populations. He would also reserve a much larger percentage of tobacco for pipe-smokers, who are always the cleverest, most courageous, and most useful members of a community.

Most important of all, he would turn his attention to the construction of a new sort of pipe, specially designed for use in the Army. This pipe would have to be unbreakable, because the only pocket in the battle-dress in which it is really convenient to carry a pipe is the little pocket in which the field-dressing is kept.

Most pipe-smoking in the Army of course is done at times or in places where smoking is forbidden, and this little pocket was no doubt designed by the original creator of the battle-dress as a place into which the pipe could be slipped at a moment's notice, the field-dressing being merely the excuse for putting it there. The bowl of the pipe of course protrudes like the ventilator of a ship, but it is a point of honour with officers in respectable units never to notice a pipe in this position.

The serious disadvantage of this little pocket, however, is that it is situated approximately at that part of the human frame that folds up when one sits down or bends. There are few sadder spectacles than a room full of

men sitting down suddenly for a lecture on the anti-tank gun, each with his pipe hastily put away as the Major enters. The sound of cracking stems comes from all parts of the room, and over the faces of the men whose pipes have gone to their Last Account comes an expression of mingled surprise, indignation, and misery that wrings the heart of the thoughtful beholder.

Yes, a Minister of Smokes should be appointed at once, and however small the War Cabinet may eventually become, he must be in it, if only to assure complete co-operation in the manufacture, supply, and delivery of Mr. Churchill's cigars.

In the Train

TO go in a train at all is an experience these days. That is to say, a proper train with a corridor and white labels on the coaches vaunting far-off destinations.

There was no time at the station to buy the common women's paper I had been looking forward to, nor the cheap edition of the unpleasant novel I had never quite faced ordering from the library, and I had left behind the handbag which had in it things to do on the journey. All the seats for luncheon had been taken too by the time I remembered about it, and the momentary delight of finding a pencil in my pocket dashed by immediately breaking the point.

How was I to get through the journey? Five hours was a long time to be in so small a space. Ten, eleven, twelve, one, two: so the prisoner in the dock counts the years!

I resigned myself to my corner. On the rack was my neatly labelled luggage, a suitable travelling coat flung on the top. There is something slightly grand about being a traveller; forgetting Hitler, I was feeling almost Continental.

As the painted stations whistled by and the contours of the landscape changed smoothly with the speed of an early cinema, I began to enjoy myself. I would tell them all about it when I got there, about the typical good-byes and pleas for postcards, about the rush, and the crowded train. I would have a delightful tale to tell of the dear old lady who had been so motherly to the soldier and the airman. "There, there!" she had said as she handed them each a ginger biscuit, "I am sure you need feeding up." It was strange to spend so long in the silent company of my intriguing *vis-à-vis*, who never looked up from his book. I wished I



"Nah then, Brains Trust."

had the courage of the old lady, or her technique. If the ice had been broken there might have been a thousand things we had in common, a score of subjects to be feverishly discussed. Or none: perhaps conjecture was best.

There was a new kind of picture where the framed photographs of Abergele usually are. I must tell them about that, and the peculiar coloured hair of the girl who brought round buns. The buns took a long time to eat and were a war kind. I wondered how I could explain the taste to them; it was rather good.

I hoped we'd get there soon, there was so much to say. I'd show them the game I had invented with the letters of "Be On Your Guard," and enlarge on how persistent that fly had been about getting to the top of the looking-glass, and how the pattern of the plush on the seats was exactly the same as in one's childhood.

But when the train stopped at last, what an effort it was to take action; to struggle with the strap and compete for a porter!

And they had come to meet me. Laughter, talk, bustle, news, kisses, inquiries. I was a little dazed.

"Well, darling, and did you have an awful journey?" Already it had faded—the fly, the romantic reader, the swiftly-moving landscape. Does the prisoner half regret leaving his familiar cell? Is his Picciola, coaxed into flower after years of care, immediately forgotten? Has he no words to tell of his emotions? No desire to pour out his pent-up sorrows and hopes when he finds himself at last in a free world?

"Oh, yes," was all I could think of to say, "pretty frightful; but it's lovely to be here."

o o

In Search of a Toasting-Fork

IT seems that mincing-forks, lard-knives and bent horse shears are exempt from the purchase tax. This is cheering news. At least it is for mincers, lard-makers and bent horses.

The Commissioners of Customs and Excise in a rare spirit of generosity have exempted an imposing list of knives, including an occasional fork and scissor. Among them are bacon-curing knives, beef knives, double-

handed brad knives, scuds and pig scrapers.

For the murderously inclined there are sticking-knives and daggers, throating knives, breast choppers, scalpels and bone extractors. And for the really free fight—boomerang steak knives. For those who stop short of murder a lot of quiet fun could no doubt be had with a rumping-knife.

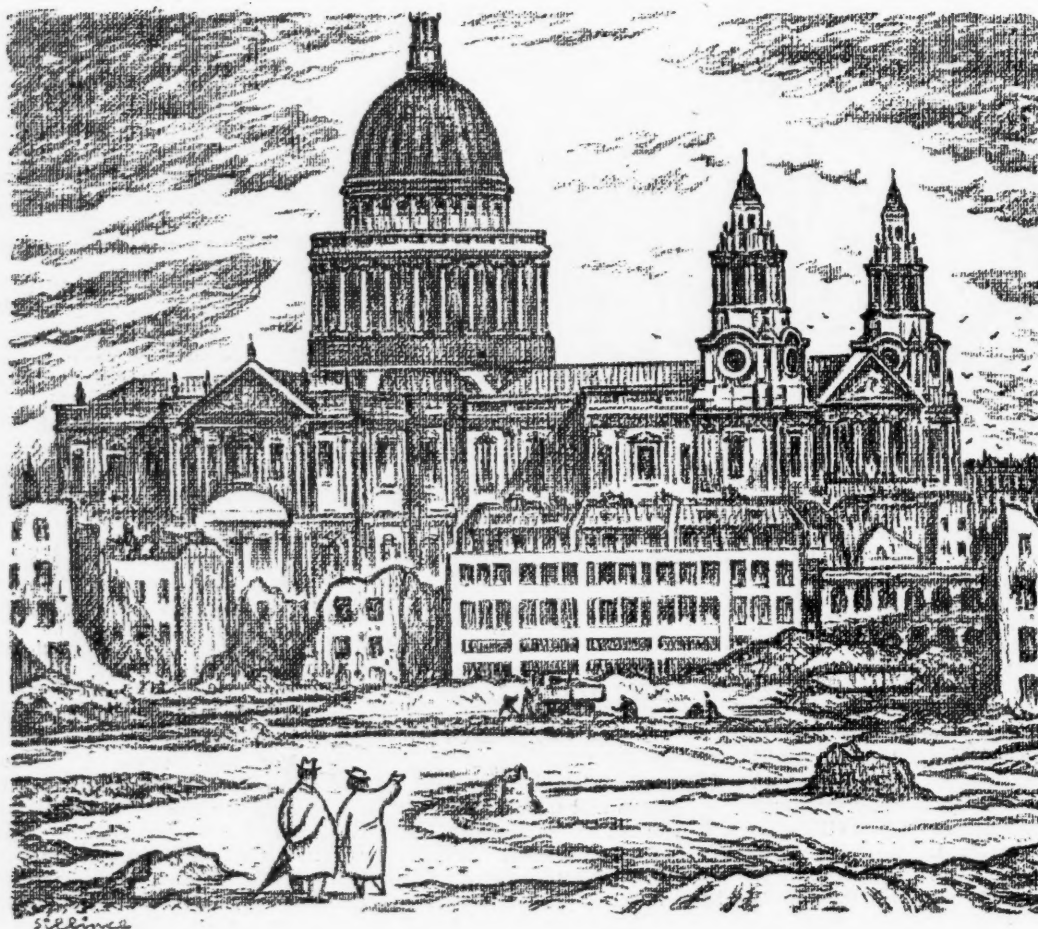
A variety of fish knives dealing with various extinct species such as halibut, sole and salmon would be of considerable interest to collectors and natural history museums.

I was pulled up short with the "one-armed man knife." I imagined a Captain Hook with an even deadlier sticker, scraper or scalpel. Soberer reflection reassured me that they must mean those wonderfully intricate knives of one's boyhood which could do anything from defacing a wall to a major operation. Their capacity for extracting stones from horses' hooves has been quoted too often to be remarkable.

I finished the list in a puzzled and chastened frame of mind. I understood that most knives would probably make masts, although I had a sneaking suspicion that anyone really in the know would call them adzes. But I hadn't the remotest idea what a scud or a brad was. Slicers, stringers and triers left me as cold.

But one thing intrigued me enormously. There is no tax on "window forks of a type dissimilar from that of the domestic toasting-fork." Now I need a toasting-fork, and although I have no idea what a window fork is, I intend to spend some time in finding out. And if I can find one sufficiently dissimilar to evade the tax and sufficiently similar to toast a piece of domestic bread I shall consider my study of the Commissioners of Customs and Excise pamphlet amply repaid.





"Actually this is now very much as Wren INTENDED us to see St. Paul's."

A Poet's Curse

THIS for all printers I indite:
 For every comma one puts in,
 Unasked, to poems that I write
 May he find suddenly a pin
 Secreted where he lies at night,
 And may it penetrate his skin.

For every one he takes away
 May there from his own trousers fall
 A button in the broadest day,
 No more returning to his call
 And may no other button stay
 For ever in that place at all.

And he who prints for any whim
 My colons in some lesser guise,
 This is the doom I lay on him:
 May his own hat before his eyes
 Be taken, and an older brim
 Be left, and of a smaller size.

Or if with fuller grander stops
 My semi-colons he replace,
 May some great hat be left that drops
 The whole way down upon his face,
 For his lost hat, and may no shops
 Have one to fit him in its place. ANON.



HAWKING PEACE

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, November 25th.—House of Lords: Ladies' Day.

House of Commons: The War Minister Makes a Rash Promise, and an Admiral Says a Piece.

Wednesday, November 26th.—House of Commons: Regulation 18b in the Limelight.

Thursday, November 27th.—House of Commons: A Decisive Vote is Given.

Tuesday, November 25th.—There are no ladies in the House of Lords, but, by and large, the gentler sex gets a better deal from the Upper House than from the Lower, where there are ladies.

Here was Lord "Boom" TRENCHARD, a man's man if ever there was one, gravely asking the Government, in the Gilded Chamber, if they were satisfied that conditions in the women's Services (the A.T.S. in particular) were all they should be.

He did not want women "told off" by men officers or N.C.O.s, and gallantly defended the women-o'-war against alleged sneers that they "had nothing to do but enjoy themselves." So eloquent was his appeal for gentleness for the gentle that that great purist, Lord SAMUEL, was moved to speak of "manning—or womaning"—some committee.

After that anything seemed possible, and it was with only the slightest surprise that their Lordships heard Sergeant Lord STRABOLGI, of the Home Guard, suggest uniforms for all women, including munition workers.

"Uniforms made by men!" snapped Lord TRENCHARD, as if that were the very depth of insult. "They are becoming, anyway!" snapped back Lord STRABOLGI, as if that ended the argument.

Lord CROFT, Under-Secretary for War, intervening with diffidence in a discussion that seemed a bit beyond him, paid high tribute to the women of the Services, who, said he, had built up their Services from rather less than nothing—and pretty well too.

Lord CROFT enunciated the startling proposition that "after middle-age, those who can bear the strain of command, plus bombardment, are very rare." He went on to disprove it by standing up commandingly to a

vigorous bombardment from across the floor—and he (as he confided to a cheering House) will see sixty no more.

The War Office would not be soft with women—or hard either. They would try to emulate the littles of the Three Bears and provide that which was "just right." This was something "definitely better" than was given to men, but definitely not so good as women University students might reasonably expect in peace-time.

Encouraged by Lord SAMUEL's little *lapsus linguæ*, Lord CROFT permitted himself both "Ack-ack guns," and

SUMMERSKILL and Miss IRENE WARD! Would the noble Lord have been able to get away with that remark in the Lower House? Not Lady ASTOR likely!

Lord TRENCHARD unsmilingly turned down Lord STRABOLGI's suggestion of more uniforms, saying he foresaw the time when even he and his fellow Peers would have to wear Party uniforms. And what would a poor Cross-Bencher do then, poor thing?

"On With The Motley!" roared Cross-Bencher Lord SWINTON, carried away with the idea. Marshal of the Royal Air Force the Viscount TRENCHARD just gave Lord SWINTON what is known as a "look." And that ended the debate.

Over in the Commons, a number of United States Congressmen looked on at proceedings that must have puzzled them considerable.

Captain DAVID MARGESSON, War Minister, rashly promised that he would endeavour to stem the flood of paper passing to (and from) the Home Guard, but rejected a counter-suggestion that women should be enrolled as full-time H.G. clerks, to dam the paper tide.

Mr. CHURCHILL astonished the House by referring to "My Right Honourable Friend, the Prime Minister." This seemingly too-literal obedience to the "no names" rule was explained by the fact that he had absent-mindedly read a statement framed for his colleague, the LORD PRIVY SEAL. The PREMIER, as they say in the police court reports, joined heartily in the laughter his slip promoted.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir ROGER KEYES commented acidly on his dismissal from command of the "Commandos"—an event which he prophesied

would postpone our victory and put off the turning point of the war. Moreover, while the military were permitted to dictate policy, things would always be thus. The punditti of Whitehall, he meant, not the leaders in the field.

The House was not deeply moved.

Young Mr. G. E. H. PALMER made a welcome return from active service to say a word for his comrades of the "gunners." A small beer (if obtainable), a small packet of cigarettes (if any), and a 2½d. stamp used up a private soldier's daily pay, and it would be a good idea to give him a bit more, said Mr. PALMER hopefully.



KNIGHT-ERRANDRY

(After Millais)

LORD TRENCHARD

"The proof of the pudding—" although he safeguarded himself by describing the second as "unparliamentary."

An Army may march on its stomach, but it also wants to be amused, have its socks darned and its buttons sewn on, and be transported. So more and more women were wanted for the Forces.

Lord SWINTON did not want female replicas of the male genus Sergeant-Major, much as he admired that strong-voiced biped. In a moment of incaution—or was it bravado?—he said this: "Women are quite intelligent people!"

Just like that! Shades of Dr. EDITH



"Did you ring, Sir?"

"Yes. Would you mind putting a couple of rivets in these, please—I want to wear them this afternoon."

Uncle Remus KINGSLEY WOOD, Chancellor of the Exchequer, looked kinda thoughtful, but said nuffin.

Wednesday, November 26th.—Hard words were used to-day about the much-discussed Regulation 18b, which authorizes the imprisonment of all whose activities the HOME SECRETARY suspects to be against the public interest.

Sir IRVING ALBERY and Sir ARCHIBALD SOUTHBY took the matter so seriously that they moved an amendment to the Address of Thanks to the KING for his Speech from the Throne. Carrying of such an amendment spells death for the Government, but it was made clear by Sir ARCHIBALD that no such climax was intended.

Sir IRVING said this about the Regulation: "It is un-British, contrary to our cherished traditions, the quintessence of tyranny."

Sir ARCHIBALD (who is an old salt, and says what he means, as well as meaning what he says) told the Minister the time had come to amend at leisure a Regulation made in haste when war first began. He wanted the

reasonable liberty of the subject restored, which meant that he wanted 18b to cease to be.

He did not like despotism, even when it was in defence of liberty. Somehow, the two did not mix. Of course, said he, the Government ought to have special powers in war-time, but not these completely arbitrary and autocratic ones. Even Mr. Speaker might find himself "inside" if the HOME SECRETARY thought fit, and as for the private M.P. . . . well!

"An end to tyranny!" was the honourable Baronet's rallying cry.

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Home Secretary, replied that he could not get on without the Regulation, and that it was essential to him and, through him, to the country. Even if it did work a bit hardly sometimes, the interest of the State (which means all of us) overrode all other considerations.

The amendment was not forced to a division, but the case of Albery, Southby and Others v. Herbert Morrison must be regarded as "part heard" only.

Thursday, November 27th.—Mr. JOHN

McGOVERN, supported by his pocket party of I.L.P. men, moved a motion regretting that the British Government had not built Utopia instead of taking part in the war. It produced a queer debate, in which there was some hard hitting. It produced also a very definite statement from Mr. EDEN, the Foreign Secretary, that whatever anybody else did Britain would not negotiate with HITLER.

Then the House threw out the motion by 326 votes to 2, after which it unanimously passed the vote of thanks to the KING for his speech opening Parliament.

TO ALL HOUSEHOLDERS

HAVE YOU cleared out every possible scrap of accumulated wastepaper ready for collection by your Local Authority? Books, magazines, catalogues, timetables—please keep only what is really essential, and let the Government have the rest for vital war needs.

If you haven't, why not start a glorious clearance TO-DAY?



"The lady wishes an old-fashioned Christmas-card with Santa Claus on it."

The Explanation

WHEN Mrs. Pledge said that there was nothing, nothing in the world, that she wouldn't give up for Hitler, one understood perfectly well both what she meant and what she didn't mean.

But Aunt Emma—not at her best owing to the black-out in the back-kitchen having for the second time attracted the unfavourable attention of a Special Constable—none other, as it happened, than Mr. Pledge—chose to take her up rather sharply.

"You sound, dear—although I'm sure quite unintentionally—as though you were on his side. Mind you, I understand perfectly—I shouldn't dream of suspecting you of anything of the kind—but others might."

The Red Cross Sewing Party—which had been getting rather tired anyway of the book, all about love and designed to get us right away from the war but, as Miss Littlemug said, far grimmer than any war—formed itself almost immediately into two rather strongly divided parties.

Mrs. Battlegate said that, speaking as a soldier's wife, she was and always had been in favour of the death penalty when it came to treason.

The rest of us felt, from long experience, that she was speaking simply as Mrs. Battlegate, and would have said the same whatever her husband's profession.

Miss Littlemug laid down the cutting-out scissors, but instantly, and wisely, snatched them up again before anybody else could reach them.

"There is, if I may say so, a deliberate misunderstanding here. Mrs. Pledge simply says that she would give up anything—husband, child, home, wealth, happiness, ration-book, gas-mask, every other inconvenience of modern life, and what—"

"I'm sure we'd all of us give up our gas-masks and ration-books most willingly—and now that tinned food is going to give trouble too, though sliced carrots don't appeal to me in any way," said Cousin Florence.

"Dear," said Miss Littlemug, point-

ing the cutting-out scissors straight at Cousin Florence's face, although evidently without any conscious aim—"dear, forgive me. Both you and Mrs. Pledge have been, as my dear old uncle, a school-teacher for forty-three years and known all over Barrow-in-Furness, used to say, talking loosely."

Cousin Florence folded up the pyjama-legs that had been occupying her, referred in some obscure and yet wholly understandable way to Restoration drama, unfolded the pyjama-legs in great agitation, and said that, whatever her faults, she had never before been accused of coarseness.

"Words, words, words!" cried Miss Pin—probably quoting her literary employer, Mr. Pancatto.

Everybody waited for her to carry the idea—if idea it was—a little further, but she said nothing more.

So Miss Littlemug went on:

"As Miss Pin says, words are very easily misunderstood. The same idea, more than a quarter of a century ago,

struck me very much, I remember, in a sermon I once heard. You may be surprised that I should remember it so clearly, but my memory has, from a child, been remarkable. It used to be said of me, by a highly-gifted University lecturer, that I could have gone any distance in the world on memory alone."

"Let us," said Mrs. Battlegate forcibly, "keep to the point. No one, I hope and believe, is less ready than myself to think the worst, but I consider that Mrs. Pledge should be asked to explain *in what way* and *why* she wishes to help the enemy."

Miss Plum, always a most kind-hearted woman, poured out a cup of tea and asked Mrs. Pledge to drink it while it was hot, and try not to let herself be upset.

The advice, however, had definitely come too late, and long before the tea had been wiped from the tray, poured out of the saucer, and wrung out of the many-tailed bandage, the whole of the Red Cross Sewing Party was upset.

In a sense this led to the re-establishment of comparative calm. Mrs. Battlegate said that the last thing she wished was to cause distress, but that at a time like this patriotism *must* override private considerations, and Emma—more simply—observed that she thought Mrs. Pledge ought to stop crying and that really she herself often wished she were dead before she ever spoke a word, people were so ready to misunderstand her, and Miss Littlebug told—at some length—a story of days long gone by in the dear old Rectory of her childhood, where one word, carelessly spoken, had destroyed a friendship of many years' standing, broken up a happy home, and wrecked more than one life.

Miss Plum poured out a good deal more tea—this time successfully.

"Shall we," she asked tremulously, "make the break *now*?"

This again was not perfectly happily worded and one could only hope that it might pass unnoticed as Cousin Florence gave utterance.

"We should all, I think, be happier," she said, "if Mrs. Pledge would simply explain exactly what it was that she meant."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Battlegate, gravely and rather loudly—though really no more loudly than usual—"certainly. *Anyone* is entitled to an explanation."

Everybody looked at Mrs. Pledge, and any number of pins could have been heard to drop.

"All that I said, and I am prepared to stand by my words, is that I would give up anything—anything in the world—for Hitler." E. M. D.

Homage

(People in the occupied countries are encouraged to place flowers before the pictures of Hitler.)

WITHIN this shrine the Virgin-Mother stood,
A simple figure carved in wood,
And we, poor fools, in other days
Would bring
An offering,
Symbol of love and praise—
All country flowers,
Roses and may
And gentians gay,
Cowslips and snowdrops white,
And candles to delight
Her midnight hours.

What shall we bring to him who
stands there now,
Before whose image we must bow?
What flowers are fit for such as he
Whose skill
Can only kill,
Whose sport is cruelty?
Bring foxgloves fell,
Henbane and rue
And poisoned yew
With nightshade, black and bright,
And in his soul at night
The fires of Hell.



At the Play

"LOVE IN A MIST" (ST. MARTIN'S)

Of the Eternal Triangle we have often heard. But the Quadrangle is, in fact, no less continuous upon our stage. Set two couples to share the space proper to one and the result will be, as every Billeting Officer knows, drama: and the essence of drama, as the professors never cease to remind us, is conflict. Of this too the Billeting Officer may be more than faintly aware.

The conflict may be tragical. (How fortunate for *Romeo and Juliet* if the *Montagues* and *Capulets* had had different cities and so more space in which to dislike each other!) But more commonly the struggle is comical. Accidents of weather or the road, a lame horse of old, and now a broken machine, collect the incompatibles, bang the door, and leave them to scrap for bed and board. So it happens once more in *Love in a Mist*, by KENNETH HORNE. The Exmoor climate turns the members of the Eternal Quadrangle—in this case a honeymoon couple and a pair of queasy shiverers on the brink of a less respectable romance—to children of the mist: imprisoned by the fog in *Mrs. Evans's* somewhat sinister bungalow, they find themselves with one small bed and one large hard dining-room floor. Who, then, shall have the bed and who, quite literally, the board? As far as the sleeping arrangements are visible, this is not so much a Bedroom Comedy as a Floor Show.

Here, then, is a very old friend, the friend of all-too-neighbourly relations. It seems that this kind of play is never finally played out. Certainly three Acts of battle for a bedstead strain overmuch the possibilities of Dramatic Conflict. It all depends, like boiled leg of mutton, on "the trimmings." The dramatist in this case has proved himself a deft dispenser of the caper-sauce. He has kept his mattress manoeuvres entirely inoffensive and he has invented two comparatively fresh types of libertine, who are, in fact, as innocent of purpose as they are unfortunate in their lodging. Hence the plot has this pleasant complication that, while two of the lovers are lawfully

craving to be together, the other two are righteously glad to be apart. And it is not easy to be kept asunder in the thin ration of bungalowoid space afforded by the moorland message of *Mrs. Evans*.

Happily the character of *Mrs. Evans*,



RAPTURE

Mr. Evans . . . MR. LIONEL GADSDEN

whose speech is of the Pennine while her home is of Dunkery, is a first-rate support for a story which badly needs such a prop. She is a landlady on the grand scale with a special line in lugubrious humour. Her husband is a

tongue-tied Welshman, a seemingly moon-struck mute with an ominous light in his eye. Miss MARJORIE RHODES looms tremendously about and above her orphans of the storm and makes the very most of her lines, which come crashing out of the mist and the kitchen with both a vinegar tartness and the volume of a Lancashire hot-pot. The various corners of the Quadrangle are occupied with brilliant asperity by Miss ANN TODD, with a forlorn distress by Mr. RICHARD BIRD, with uneasy virtue by Miss ANNA KONSTAM, and with a jovially sheepish embarrassment by Mr. MICHAEL SHEPLEY. Such a piece, with its potentially tiresome repetition of a single situation, needs the briskest, most ingenious presentation, and gets it.

I. B.

"DUCKS AND DRAKES" (APOLLO)

It happens on a duck-farm. As usually occurs in pastoral plays and so rarely in pastoral life, the sun continually shines and the young ladies in charge all look elegant and exquisite beyond any bucolic plausibility. Duck-farms are mucky places, but there is no sign of it here. The Company is in luck all round, for, though it is war-time, they have an Irishman to do the work and a cook to do the cooking and cocktail ingredients in abundance.

Altogether, Crowpastures Farm in M. J. FARRELL's new play seems very close to Shaftesbury Avenue. Its inhabitants are all branches or twigs of the *Tree* family. There is *Mrs. Tree*, who can display a crab-apple tartness, and cousin *Irene Tree*, who is vague and silly and nice, and three daughters-in-law with husbands away at the war and ducks as their rather wearisome distraction. Being pent up they quarrel, and domestic bickering is usually the stuff of comedy. But something has gone wrong in this case; the fun is a trifle sour and we are relieved when the father of one of the girls intervenes and the comedy becomes farce.

He belongs to the conquering tribe of smiling, engaging, middle-aged failures who used to be played irresistibly by Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY and are now played no less well by Mr. RONALD SQUIRE. His notion of a farm is stables merely, and all



"THE MORE WE ARE TOGETHER THE MERRIER WE'LL BE."

Pat MISS ANN TODD
Rose MISS ANNA KONSTAM
Mrs. Evans MISS MARJORIE RHODES
Howard MR. MICHAEL SHEPLEY
Nigel MR. RICHARD BIRD



BOND STREET, DECEMBER 1941

grass to him is Turf. So he starts his nonsense as the surreptitious owner of a bargain in blood-stock and eventually wins a most unlikely race after some most unlikely incarceration in a duck-pen.

Improbability is no handicap in farce, provided that the nonsense is admitted to be nonsense and played as such. But in this case there is not enough invention in the story or vigour in its rendering. It must have been very difficult to accommodate the preposterous racing episodes to the bitter humours of the boxed-up family and the occasional inroads of genuine poignancy. After all, three young women with husbands away on the wings and seas of death are no joke, if reality is allowed a moment's entrance.

So life at Crowpastures offers uneasy entertainment. We admire the way in which Miss LILIAN BRAITHWAITE mingles the acid with the affable, and Miss MARY JERROLD is brightly

SEARCHLIGHT MEN

FROM a letter received: "I write to express the great gratitude of the men and of ourselves. It has been such a pleasure to take round these woollies and see the delight of the men and hear the next day that they'd been really warm the night before. These men have a very hard time and have to stand-to in all weathers with very little protection. The gifts provided by your Fund have made a very real difference to them." Please join in the service by sending your contribution. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

troublesome. Mr. W. G. FAY and Miss KATHLEEN HARRISON, speaking for Eire and England, make the most of a sparse good line, and the young wives' tale is radiantly beautified by the presence of Miss NORA SWINBURNE, Miss JUDY CAMPBELL and Miss EILEEN PEEL. But all the acting on the first night seemed to be too gentle and refined for the size of the house and the nature of the play. Perhaps if the performance had been less West-Endy the reception would have been less East-Windy. I. B.

Plumb Lines

THERE is no plummet that could ever plumb,
No altimeter that could truly show
The depths of our despair till plumbers
come,
The heights our spirits rise to when
they go.



"The-er-milk-er-the-er-milk-er-the MILKMAID, Mam!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Political Triloggy

NEVER perhaps has a British statesman so succeeded in bewildering his public by vanishing tricks and reappearances as has EDWARD WOOD of the Back-benches, who became Lord IRWIN, Viceroy, who became Lord HALIFAX, Foreign Secretary. Mr. ALAN CAMPBELL JOHNSON, in a biography that is less inhibited by political repressions than is common practice in the story of a living character, makes little enough of the first period and confirms one's impression that the appointment to India was based on character rather than on positive achievement. Such character, if it be compounded of sincerity and subtlety, of inward conviction and outflowing sympathy, would seem to be the proper equipment for the representative of the Sovereign, for the most attractive part of this long volume—*Viscount Halifax* (HALE, 21/-)—is the record of devious, inconclusive and infinitely patient conversations with Indian leaders which made possible a future still to be fully implemented. In the later chapters, where the policy and history of European pacification are under review, the author is at times visibly ill at ease in assigning responsibility. More especially he is hard pressed to explain his hero's apparent willingness to be superseded in his own office at the time of Munich, but he makes it clear that his strong handling of affairs through the Polish crisis placed him for a time virtually at the head of the State. The outstanding impression in this book is one of scale. Lord HALIFAX's loftiness of outlook appears on every page, and of stature in many photographs. An unfair gust of momentary popular disfavour is as immaterial to the one as to the other.

China, Meet Europe.

The great tragi-comedy of China's resolve to keep herself to herself in the face of Europe's stronger resolve to force her into commercial relations, is the theme of a vivacious and masterly study by Mr. MAURICE COLLIS. Part One of *The Great Within* (FABER, 21/-) describes the Chinese Empire of the seventeenth century, the largest and richest empire in the world but already in domestic disruption. Part Two shows the coming of the first "Red Barbarians" in the persons of the brilliant Jesuit RICCI, astronomer and clock-maker, and his companions. Part Three sees the piratical WEDDELL, emissary of the needy court of CHARLES I; ANSON, with his pressed crew of Chelsea Pensioners; Lord MACARTNEY, the first English ambassador, offering England's economical little gifts to an Emperor whose eunuchs used solid gold spittoons; and Lord AMHERST, dismissed with obloquy and a particularly flowery snub to his master GEORGE III. The last hundred years are cleverly telescoped and challengingly commented. One may be permitted to regret, however, not, as Mr. COLLIS suggests, that we were unable to "civilize" China in time to frustrate Japan, but that we were such fools and knaves as to "civilize" Japan sufficiently to challenge China.

Rites and Ceremonies

From bell-ringing to bonfires, from guys to grottos, from sword-dancing to memorial sermons, Miss CHRISTINA HOLE, going the round of the English year, gives a scholarly and entertaining account of *English Custom and Usage* (BATSFORD, 10/6). Here, routed out with the infectious enthusiasm of a terrier in a rabbit-hole, are the whys and wherefores of dozens of old ceremonies: some vanished, some newly-revived, but most of them perennially youthful. Here one discovers the origin of such ancient Oxonian observances as the Boar's Head ritual at Queen's and such extremely recent ones as the Shakespearian toasts in the painted guestroom of No. 3 Cornmarket. Here too are famous spectacles like the Grasmere rush-bearing and obscure ones like the annual presentation of a quill pen to St. Andrew Undershaft's effigy of JOHN STOW. That the book's photographs (hard on a hundred) are rather curious than artistic is due to the fact that they are mainly the products of ordinary Press photography. Yet there is



"And now I want it painted black so the light can't be seen from the air."

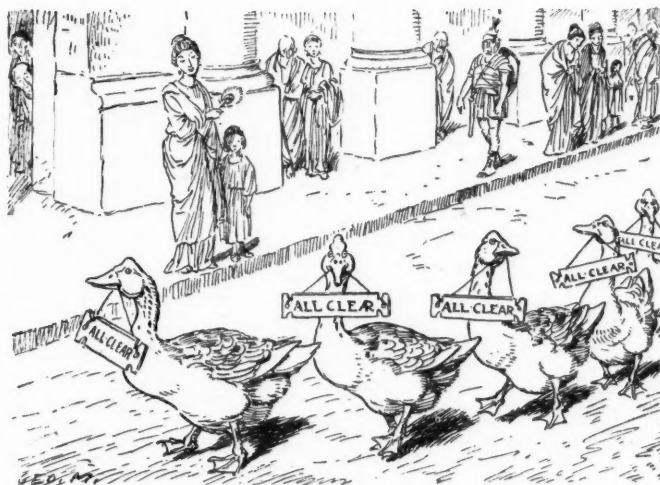
plenty of scope—now that the art of representation is not wholly *démodé*—for both brush and camera in these delightful evidences of a sound national taste for picturesque junketing and devotion.

Open Boats

Lone voyagers in days of peace have often referred to the difficulty of finding a companion whose compatibility will stand the strain of life in a small boat at sea. The view is one which finds tragic confirmation in *Two Survived* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 7/6), the story, retold by Mr. GUY PEARCE JONES, of seventy days spent in an open boat by two survivors of the cargo steamer *Anglo-Saxon*, after their ship had been hammered into scrap by a German raider in the same senseless terror which leads a murderer to batter the body of a lifeless victim. Seven of her company escaped in an eighteen-foot boat, ill-provisioned and ill-found into the bargain, and of these five died before she reached the West Indies. The two boys—they were little more—who lived through this incredible odyssey were, by one of the lesser ironies of the dreadful business, shipmates without being friends, and the only link between them seems to have been that of common suffering. What that suffering makes a terrible story—in normal times no doubt unnecessarily so, though its horror is lit by flashes of heroism like that of the dying man who—almost repeating SIDNEY at Zutphen—refused the draught of water which might serve another's need. In these days it is well that people should be brought to realize, even at the cost of their finer sensibilities, both what Nazi beastliness means to its victims and what the merchant seaman faces every time he goes to sea.

An Irish Tragi-Comedy

The house of Aragon—in the Ireland of 1920—is about to fall with a resounding clatter, and Miss M. J. FARRELL prepares for this with all the cunning of a romantic novelist. There is a fine air of decadent sunset about her landscape, with the handsome overbearing house in the forefront and the little figures about it most distracted. Something, it seems, is always going on at Aragon: if it is not *Foxes* living, it is *Foxes* ghostly, but still elegant, wicked, passionate and unashamed. As for the living, in these *Two Days in Aragon* (COLLINS, 8/-), *Grania* at eighteen is sluttishly but heroically in love with *Nannie's* son; *Sylvia's* young man is seized by the Sinn Féin; old *Aunt Pigeon*, between dreaming and waking, hoards food for the fairies; and *Nannie* herself, the prime actor and victim of the drama, is still the virtual despot of the house. So far there is nothing very unusual: this is the common stuff of romantic novelists. But Miss FARRELL is witty as well as romantic: her unhappy lover is fat, not sylph-like; her *Foxes* and their peasant companions are less fabulous and more touching than the types; and what would furnish Mr. EUGENE O'NEILL with a tragedy is here a



A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED INCIDENT IN THE HISTORY OF
ANCIENT ROME.

SEQUEL TO THE WARNING GIVEN BY THE PATRIOTIC GEESSE.

George Morrow, December 5, 1917

rueful tragi-comedy. The writing itself, though generally pleasant, is unequal: a mixture of precise and evocative expression and the rather exuberant manner sometimes taken for that of a "born writer."

Three Acres and a Cow

Having hinted that F. D. SMITH and BARBARA WILCOX neglected, in their admirable *Living in the Country*, that modest figure the smallholder, the present reviewer notes with particular pleasure that the longing of the small man or woman to be master or mistress of his or her acres is the staple inspiration of *Back to the Country* (BLACK, 6/-). The land, our authors admit, is a dangerous choice—there is no knowing what "political factors" may make of it; and they rightly assume that no one would take on so commercially unremunerative a job without its inestimable offset of independence. But with grit, commonsense, average health, no over-ambitious equipment, and enough capital to tide over the first three years, you may succeed in a number of small ventures; and a blend of these, not necessarily all agricultural, has the backing of French sagacity which approves the combination of one family's little business or profession with the rustic activities of the *propriétaire*. Sixteen chapters of sound advice end with a dozen useful and entertaining interviews with enthusiasts who range from an Oundle boy growing cabbages at Evesham to an ex-Chancery barrister who has planted 25,000 trees single-handed.

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. I am not the worrying type but a particular dream which I keep on dreaming is beginning to get me down. Do you think there is anything in it? I seem to be riding a tricycle in my underclothes round and round a circular tea-tent or marquee which is partly below ground. Every now and then I pass the entrance-flap where a sort of woodpecker, chained to a dilapidated carpet-sweeper, calls out, "Come and get it!" Sometimes he calls, "Hi, spy, kick the can!" instead. I am thirty-eight, a shelter-marshall, and I do not eat heavy suppers.

MABEL PARTRIDGE (Miss).

A. Recurrent dreams of this type are instances of wish-fulfilment dreaming. The circular marquee represents matrimony (the wedding ring), into which you would like to enter if the invitation were sufficiently pressing. The man of your choice is represented by the woodpecker—in reality, a local constable or perhaps your section warden (which would account for the tea-tent's being below ground), whose identity is thus cloaked because you do not care to admit an attachment openly until you are more certain of his intentions. Any advances that come from him are subject to retarding home influences; this is the meaning of the dilapidated carpet-sweeper. Finally you are riding in your underclothes because the dress problem has been weighing on your mind and you are subconsciously aware that matrimony will give you access to another's coupons. I would have to know what make of tricycle it was before I could say whether this had any particular significance.

Q. Our next-door neighbour, an ex-pelota champion, has a number of Buff Orpingtons, two or three of which have taken to coming through the hedge and laying in the old silk hats which I keep at the bottom of my garden. Our neighbour insists that the eggs, though laid on my premises, are his. I, conversely, believe them to be mine. Last week I had eleven eggs, this week I have already had seven.

H. ST.-G. ("POONA")

FORTESCUE-SMYTHE.

A. It is difficult to tell from the tone of your communication whether you wish advice or are simply boasting. If the former, I should say it depends

largely upon the purpose served by the hats you mention. Personally, I have never known anyone who had silk hats at the bottom of his garden. Unless it is an old Indian custom? Consequently I much fear that while you may be within your rights to make use of what may well be a temporary aberration on the part of the Buff Orpingtons, yet, on the other hand, unless you can explain satisfactorily the circumstance of the hats, you run a certain risk of laying yourself open to a charge of wilful alienation and enticement. As the neighbour of an ex-pelota-player, I would think twice before continuing on a course which can only end in friction; unless you think the eggs are worth it.

* * * *

Q. Since the M.O.I.'s issue of leaflets with instructions as to what to do in the event of invasion, there has been a good deal of unpleasantness in the guest-house where I am a resident, as our hostess, acting on the instruction *Keep your food hidden*, has commenced keeping all food completely concealed, mainly on the upper floors. Quite often, her memory being no longer as good as it was, she forgets where she has hidden it, with the result that the quality of the food is definitely affected by the time it reaches the table. Also, whilst eating, she habitually holds her plate on her knees under the cloth. Is there any way in which we could break her of these habits? Otherwise I for one feel I must seek accommodation elsewhere. In other respects, things are very comfortable.

STACEY MUSGROVE, B.Sc.

A. In addition to the fact that economy in the matter of food sometimes becomes a ruling passion with proprietresses of boarding-houses, you must bear in mind that we are most of us endowed with crude tendencies inherited from a dark past long antedating the dawn of civilization. It may be that your hostess's natural desire for economy, subjugated in peace-time to an even stronger desire for the success of her establishment, was unexpectedly liberated by the shock of, say, the increased cheese ration, which was made known about

the time the M.O.I. issued its invasion leaflets. She forgets where she has hidden the food *because she does not want to remember*. It would be as well to take a firm line before her condition worsens. The next phase will be a demand that the whole household keeps its food under the table-cloth while eating, a cunning subconscious device for concealing the ever more diminutive portions she intends to serve out as the war continues. What is needed is some species of shock tactics which would bring her to. As the M.O.I. leaflet in question also advised the concealment of money, why not commence hiding your cheque book and loose change at those times when you would normally pay your account, and *forgetting where they are*? This would be bound to make an impression, and in a week or two you should have no further trouble.

* * * *

Q. Could you recommend a treatment that would improve my face? After an hour or so in the dugout my complexion, never a strong point, turns grey and mottled, with sagging effects under the eyes. This is rather annoying as my *fiancé*, who lodges with us, always wakes up and becomes attentive when the All Clear goes.

"MISS YARMOUTH."

A. The condition is known as Shelter Face. Your best plan would be to have made up the following prescription from a very old firm of French cosmeticians: Mix equal parts of red lead and washing soda into a basinful of well-bruised plaster of Paris, to which the juice of six lemons has been added (to clear of the greyness). The method of application, which we regret we cannot disclose in these columns, may be had on receipt of a registered envelope from Gloria Gale, Our Glamour Bag, c/o *What Girls Can Do*.

For the depressed areas under the eyes, smear lightly with melted beeswax into which a little camphorated oil has been stirred. This will also prevent moths.

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Q. We sometimes invite a few Sherwood Foresters from the local camp to our home on Saturday evenings. Can you tell us of any parlour games we might organize which they would enjoy? My husband and I do

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Why, yes, Officer, as a matter of fact we have some evacuees staying here—why?"

not approve of darts, as this involves betting and playing for money.
(Mrs.) FLORENCE SWAN.

A. Decent men will enjoy throwing darts every bit as much if it is made clear to them from the outset that they are playing purely for the fun of the thing. If liked, a simple prize, such as a shaving-tidy or pair of cork socks, might be offered. Otherwise why not provide your soldier guests with opportunities for learning some little handicraft which might be of use in filling up leisure hours on wet days, when confined to barracks, etc.? Fretwork and poker-work are great favourites, and so are crocheting and tatting. As a result of the little "evenings" run by the office staff, practically the whole of the Black Watch is now crocheting its own Comforts, and not only this but is able to send home from time to time gifts of kettle-holders, teapot cosies, hair-tidies, etc. A grateful quartermaster-sergeant only last week tried to repay our hospitality with a fretwork set comprising pipe-rack, crumb-tray and ornamental bracket.

If something more boisterous is required, however, Foresters would probably enjoy a nature or woodcraft game such as "Feathered Frolics." To play this, those taking part make a ring round one of their number (who stands in the centre with closed eyes) and move round him in skipping step. The player in the centre, after counting thirty, points in two directions saying, "Spotted flycatcher!" "Blue titmouse!" "Meadow pipit!" or any other bird he would like to see impersonated, then opens his eyes and watches the two at whom he pointed pretend to be Meadow pipits or Blue tits, as the case may be. The one whose performance seems to him most convincing takes his place in the centre and the game continues. This is excellent for breaking the ice, particularly if the company sergeant-major can be induced to join in. Much fun consists in the uncertainty lest one is going to be called upon to impersonate without warning a Nuthatch, Continental coal-tit, etc.

* * * *

Q. In a recent lecture for fire parties I was given to understand that one should never go within ten yards of an incendiary bomb while the sparks

were flying. If this is so, how should we manage supposing an incendiary fell into one of our bedrooms, none of which is bigger than 10 ft. by 9?

THE NOOKERY.

A. Your information is correct according to the opinion of the informed in fire-fighting circles. Our advice is that you have a series of apertures, about the size of a manhole, cut in each of your bedroom walls to enable you to crawl to and fro within the prescribed radius, whatever the position of the bomb that fell. Your query should interest others with limited house space.

* * * *

Q. Is there any reliable method of singling out one's house from others in the black-out? Last winter I experienced little difficulty after fixing up a luminous bell-push, but this year I find that many other householders in our road have followed suit with knockers and keyholes, with the result that simply to look out for a luminous bell-push is not enough. Also, though fifty-three, I have never known a day's despondency since the war commenced. I eat well, sleep well, have no pain of any kind, and I enjoy my Home Guard duties whatever the weather. My friends seem to think this is not normal. What is your opinion?

ALFRED T. PLUM.

A. It sounds to us a clear case of False Fitness. Take things quietly at home for a while, and become, if possible, a Third Front fan. Try to dwell more on statistics (*re* American production, senatorial methods, etc.). You might also become a subscriber to *The New Statesman*. If you do not seem to be getting anywhere in a week or so, you should lose no time in consulting a psychiatrist.

With regard to the bell-push trouble, do not assume that a house is yours because it appears to be where yours was when you left it. A good idea is to hang in your doorway a sign such as those displayed upon shop-fronts with the word *Open* in subdued lighting upon it. For a private house the legend *Open* is inadvisable and might invite undesirable incidents. Your street number would be more appropriate. Alternately, you could keep burning over a small oil-stove in the

front hall anything that would give out an odour sufficient to guide you to the right door. Boiling fish-glue is excellent for this purpose, or any old rubber article left smouldering.

* * * *

Q. Is there anything one can do with old electric-light bulbs? Never having thrown away any since we had electricity installed in 1922, we have now a dressing-room practically full of them. As a family, we do all in our power to avoid waste in the house in war-time, but so far we have been quite unable to think of a use for these.

CLARA, LADY BUTTON-SPALDING.

A. A single bulb makes an admirable pastry support for a pie-dish, or may be turned with very little trouble into an attractive Christmas gift for a Service man if the metal end and filament are removed and some small object such as a snapshot of his home town inserted in the same way as a ship is fixed in a bottle. Similarly, two bulbs threaded together with a length of satin ribbon make a rattle for baby. If, however, you feel you would like to employ your bulbs on a somewhat larger scale, you might make a bequest to the Bedford Estate, suggesting that they be broken up and fixed in cement along wooden fencing in such a way that the amenities of the Bedford and Woburn Square gardens could still be preserved.

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Tribute to a Treasure

A YOUNG hand-maiden served me once,
She house-kept with a pleasing grace.
Her temperament was calm and light,
Her very presence blessed the place.
She never got a message wrong;
She cooked and cleaned, she sewed,
she swept;
She washed and ironed; she fed the dog;
She almost never over-slept.
Nor did she self-indulge in moods
To load my heart with weighty fears
By looking martyred, cross or hurt:
Instead she sang along the years.
Five happy years of care-free days!
And now my loved and leaned-on staff
Has, rightly, lain her apron by
To go in service with the W.A.A.F.
J. G.

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